

REMARKS

1. In response to the Office Action mailed May 19, 2006, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration. Claims 1-16, 20, 25, 26, 29-31 and 34-40 were last presented for examination. Claims 1-16, 20, 25, 29-31 and 35-40 were allowed and claims 26 and 34 were rejected in the outstanding Office Action. By the foregoing Amendments, claims 26 and 34 have been amended and claims 29, 30, 35 and 36 have been canceled. No claims have been added. Thus, upon entry of this paper, claims 1-16, 20, 25, 26, 31, 34 and 37-40 will be pending in this application. Of these twenty-five (25) claims, nine (9) claims (claims 1, 10, 16, 20, 26, 31, 34, 37 and 39) are independent.

2. Based on the above Amendments and following Remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the outstanding objections and rejections be reconsidered, and that they be withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 1-16, 20, 25, 29-31 and 35-40 recite allowable subject matter.

Claim Rejections

4. Claims 26 and 34 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,371,175 to Van Dyk, *et al.* (hereinafter, "Van Dyk"). Based on the above Amendments and following Remarks, Applicants respectfully request that these rejections be reconsidered and withdrawn.

5. Claim 26 has been amended to include the recitations of claim 29, and claims 29 and 30 have been canceled. As such, claim 26 includes the recitations of an allowed claim (claim 29), its base claim (claim 26) and all intervening claims (none). Accordingly, claim 26, as amended, is in condition for allowance.

6. Claim 34 has been amended to include the recitations of claim 36, and claims 35 and 36 have been canceled. As such, claim 34 includes the recitations of an allowed claim (claim 36), its base claim (claim 34) and all intervening claims (none). Accordingly, claim 34, as amended, is in condition for allowance.

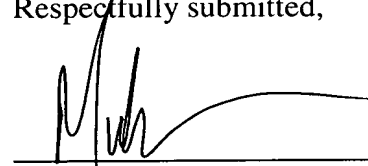
Dependent Claims

7. The dependent claims incorporate all of the subject matter of their respective independent claims and add additional subject matter which makes them *a fortiori* independently patentable over the art of record. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the outstanding rejections of the dependent claims be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Conclusion

8. In view of the foregoing, this application should be in condition for allowance. A notice to this effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael G. Verga', is written over a horizontal line.

Michael G. Verga
Reg. No. 39,410

June 15, 2006